

STATUS OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1-6 (**canceled**)

Claim 7 (**currently amended**) The method according to claim ~~38~~, 40, 41, ~~43~~, or 45, wherein said cellular component is selected from the group consisting of DNA, protein, and carbohydrate.

Claim 8 (**currently amended**) The method according to claim ~~38~~, 40, 41, ~~43~~, or 45, wherein said RNase is encoded by a gene that is integrated into the genome of the cell producing the RNase.

Claim 9 (**currently amended**) The method according to claim ~~38~~, 40, 41, ~~43~~, or 45, wherein said RNase is non-specific.

Claim 10 (**currently amended**) The method according to claim ~~38~~, 40, 41, ~~43~~, or 45, wherein said RNase is RNase A, RNase M or RNase I.

Claim 11 (**currently amended**) The method according to claim ~~38~~, 40, 41, ~~43~~, or 45, wherein expression of said RNase is transcriptionally, translationally, or post-translationally regulated.

Claim 12 (**currently amended**) The method according to claim ~~38~~, 40, 41, ~~43~~, or 45, wherein said RNase is overproduced.

Claim 13 (**currently amended**) The method of according to claim 40, 41, or 45, ~~[[;]]~~ wherein expression of said RNase is inducible.

Claim 14 (**currently amended**) The method according to claim 40, 41, or 45, [[,]] wherein expression of said RNase is constitutive.

Claims 15-39 (**canceled**)

Claim 40 (**previously presented**) A method of preparing a substantially RNA-free cellular component comprising:

- a) culturing a microbial cell producing the cellular component and an RNase, wherein said RNase is secreted into the periplasm of said cell;
- b) lysing said cell to produce a cell lysate, wherein said cell lysate comprises said cellular component and sufficient RNase activity to degrade substantially all of the RNA present in said cell lysate;
- c) incubating said cell lysate to allow said RNase to digest said RNA; and
- d) isolating said cellular component.

Claim 41 (**previously presented**) A method of preparing a substantially RNA-free cellular component comprising:

- a) culturing a microbial cell producing said cellular component and an RNase in a medium, wherein said cellular component and said RNase are secreted out of the cytoplasm of the cell into the medium and further wherein said medium contains sufficient RNase activity to degrade substantially all of the RNA present in said medium; and
- b) isolating said cellular component.

Claim 42 (**previously presented**) The method of claim 41 further comprising incubating said medium to allow said RNase to digest said RNA.

Claims 43-44 (**canceled**)

Claim 45 (currently amended) A method of preparing a substantially RNA-free cellular component comprising:

a) culturing a microbial cell producing the cellular component and an RNase, wherein said cellular component is secreted out of the cytoplasm of the cell and said RNase is secreted into the periplasm of said cell;

b) lysing said cell to produce a cell lysate, wherein said cell lysate contains said cellular component and sufficient RNase activity to degrade substantially all of the RNA present in said cell lysate;

c) incubating said cell lysate to allow said RNase to digest said RNA; and

d) isolating said cellular component.